CHAPTER FOUR

"DIGESTING DIASPORAS: VIETNAMESE MIGRANTS AND GERMAN MULTICULTURALISM"

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In early 2005, an ambitious exhibition entitled *Zuwanderungsland Deutschland* (Germany as a country of inmigration) set out to trace the history of immigration to Germany since 1500. Mounted at Berlin's *Deutsches Historisches Museum* (German Historical Museum), it showed how victims of religious persecution, journeymen, entrepreneurs, seasonal workers and refugees from all over Europe have played an important part in German life for over five hundred years. The title of the exhibition might strike anyone familiar with Germany's immigration debate as rather controversial. Indeed, successive West German governments long maintained that theirs was *not* a country of immigration.[1] This attitude was most famously embodied in the so-called *Gastarbeiter*, or "guest workers", invited to work in post-war West Germany for a limited time with no prospect of becoming citizens. The current use of the term *Zuwanderung* (*in*migration) rather than *Einwanderung* (*im*migration) in German continues to indicate a subtle distinction of principle between tolerated inmigration and welcomed or solicited immigration (Joppke 1999, 97).

West German citizenship law was long considered to be an archetypal illustration of the principle of ethnic descent, but an element of *jus soli* (place of birth) has recently been introduced.[2] Since 2000, children born in Germany of foreign parents, one of whom has lived there for at least eight years, automatically acquire German nationality. However, they are still required to choose one or other citizenship by their twenty-third birthday. This clause was added as a result of opposition to the draft law. In 1999, petitions started by the Bavarian *Christlich-Soziale Union* under the slogan "yes to integration, no to dual nationality" gathered several million signatures. This signalled popular unwillingness to accept the ramifications of dual nationality, let alone countenance the fundamental review of immigration and citizenship law envisaged by the social democratic and green party coalition then in power.[3] Joppke (1999) has argued that opposition to dual citizenship remains the only significant remnant of German citizenship law's ethnic basis. It is, however, a

substantial one, which suggests that Germany is still far from considering itself a country of immigration, let alone a multicultural society.

This chapter examines German citizenship and immigration from the point of view of the Vietnamese diaspora, a little studied group in Germany.[4] It is a particularly relevant case study, as the Cold War dictated the different circumstances of Vietnamese migrants in the same way as it defined the East and West Germanies for which they were bound. Even today, the original destination of Vietnamese migrants continues to mark their experience in a reunited Germany, just as older Germans' origins as citizens of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) have shaped them.[5] The first section of the chapter looks at how the West German immigration debate long reflected the country's self-understanding as a divided nation, which could ill afford to redefine itself. Having granted the entire German diaspora rights to West German citizenship, any modification of these membership criteria would have had wide-ranging implications in the Cold War context. Yet the influx of Vietnamese "boat people" in the 1970s benefited from West Germany's generous asylum provisions. They were regarded as ideologically acceptable refugees, eager to integrate and completely separate from the increasingly problematic guest worker programme (Bauman 2000). On the other hand, contracts for migrant Vietnamese labour negotiated between East Germany and its socialist "brother nation" represented a particularly strict application of the guest worker principle, one which would have unwelcome repercussions in the united Germany.[6] The analysis will focus on West German approaches to identity and citizenship from 1945 onwards, as the accompanying legislation extended to unified Germany after 1990. The second section of the chapter asks how diasporas are "digested" into the receiving society, focusing on food as a source of symbolic practices associated with cultural hybridity, multiculturalism and national identity-building. The final section then explores how Vietnamese restaurants might make a symbolic contribution to the debate surrounding German multiculturalism. This gives us some clues as to the positive identity which members of a diaspora can convey to the receiving country through their cuisine, a popular symbol of "safe multiculturalism".[7]

Multiculturalism can be defined as the acceptance and incorporation of "claims made by minority constituencies for inclusion and cultural recognition"[8] in social and political institutions. This requires a two-way process of integration, entailing a modification of the host culture to create a new hybrid form of national identity through dialogue and accommodation. The concept of identity, in turn, is increasingly popular in academic circles and political enquiry, although it is often approached with a frustrating lack of rigour (Brubaker 1992). Long the preserve of social psychologists attempting to

theorise the psychological link between the individual and the group, identity is defined by Tajfel as:

> That part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership.[9]

Given that social identity theory sets out to describe the composition and content of a group, particularly in opposition to non-members, it is highly relevant to national identity. As Poole puts it: "The nation is not just a form of consciousness, it is also a form of *self-consciousness*....If the nation is an imagined community, it is also a form of *identity*."[10] Identity in the political context is an inchoate sense of belonging which is manipulated and mobilised, notably by governments in their ongoing process of nation-building. National identity is one among multiple identities capable of commanding loyalty and legitimacy in the political arena. It has a bearing on all other policy areas, notably citizenship and immigration.

Brubaker's (1992) oft-cited comparison of citizenship in France and Germany contrasts the predominantly civic understanding of French national belonging as expressed in the *jus soli* principle with Germany's bestowal of citizenship based on descent, according to *jus sanguinis*. Subsequent critiques have sought to highlight the contested and shifting nature of German citizenship law rather than emphasise an overriding, guiding trend.[11] With the emergence of nationalist ideology as a major legitimating factor in modern state-building, so too did citizenship come to be associated with the newly prevailing notions of national belonging. These were manifold, contested and complex. In 1870, the new German state already combined nation-based as well as state-based criteria of belonging. Its citizenship regime consisted of a system of naturalisation coupled with restrictive criteria of descent. Government attempts to extend naturalisation provisions during the Weimar Republic came up against strong opposition to *Fremdstämmigkeit*, or foreign roots. German Jews, for instance, already suffered under these restrictions before the Nazi regime introduced a new citizenship category of *Reichsdeutsche* to denote privileged, "racially pure" citizens and systematic selection and extermination began. Following the Second World War, the Allied powers reverted to pre-1933 citizenship legislation.

The shadow of the Iron Curtain loomed so large over West Germany's citizenship policy that it completely blocked out the issue of economic migrants, since the Basic Law bestowed automatic citizenship on all ethnic Germans in the Eastern bloc. Having thus taken on responsibility for millions of potential

German migrants, the West German government was reluctant to include the tens of thousands of guest-workers who were actually settling:

> The very existence of East Germany made a redefinition of German citizenship....difficult, as this would *ipso facto* dilute the pan-German definition taken over by West Germany.[12]

When the Iron Curtain disappeared and that potential was realised, the pressing issue of ethnic Germans once again pushed non-German immigration to the bottom of the agenda. Following the 1998 German federal election, Gerhard Schröder's coalition government promised a debate which historical circumstance had hindered thus far. Its result, the nationality law of 2000, rejected the principle of life-long dual nationality and the prospect of divided loyalties it entailed. Citizenship for German-born children of foreigners was not an automatic right. It had to be sealed by a positive recognition of Germany and repudiation of any other nationality by the age of twenty-three. This was a direct result of vocal party and public opposition.[13] The latest piece of legislation in this field is the 2005 immigration law. Among other measures, this simplifies residence permits, tying the naturalisation process to several years' residence and the completion of a course in German language and civic culture. The law signals a move away from the guest worker model in that migrants' presence is deemed permanent rather than temporary, and integration is promoted accordingly.

Citizenship and immigration legislation is an important expression of how nation and belonging are constructed both legally and politically. The legacy of National Socialism, for instance, was central to shaping subsequent West German laws on political asylum, which were long renowned for their openness to victims of persecution. Giesen has argued that in West Germany, identification with post-war economic reconstruction made a virtue out of necessity. Emphasis on traits such as "industriousness, reliability and efficiency" helped to fill the gaping void left by the collapse of Nazism.[14] This was a form of German identity in which guest workers could be involved and included, yet the lasting influence of the *jus sanguinis* principle on citizenship law entailed the inclusion of ethnic German returnees (*Aussiedler*) and East Germans but the exclusion of guest workers. Unpacking this conception of ethnicity and descent, Giesen differentiates between its romantic associations with nature and ecological politics and its more exclusionary manifestations.

Today, naturalisation rates on the part of guest workers and their descendants continue to be low (Green 2004). This has led to claims of a revival of denizenship, defined as permanent resident status without the political rights of citizenship.[15] It can partly be explained by the fact that dual citizenship is not

accepted as a rule (though there are discretionary exceptions and it is routinely accepted as a consequence of *jus sanguinis* where one parent is German). Practical and emotional ties continue to bind migrants to their home countries. These are well documented among Turkish migrants who face difficulties regarding inheritance and military service in renouncing Turkish citizenship (Beier-de Haan 2005, 272). Anecdotal evidence from the Vietnamese community of a naturalised German citizen who for business reasons, on returning to live in Vietnam, renounced German for Vietnamese citizenship, suggests that migrants with dual nationality are better equipped to cope with the vagaries of life. Many would argue, however, that citizenship should be linked to more than instrumental loyalty, and German citizenship law supports this approach (Kostakopolou 2006).

Giesen also points to a rejection of both ethnic and *petit bourgeois* interpretations of German identity among some sections of society (Giesen 2001, 49). This attitude was typified in the student protests of 1968 against materialism, bureaucracy and German society's perceived reluctance to come to terms with Nazism. The student protests deplored what they saw as the continuing government authoritarianism embodied in proposed emergency laws. Chancellor Willy Brandt, elected in 1969, accordingly proposed to "dare more democracy." In terms of identity politics, there was a concerted attempt to engage in *Vergangensheitsbewältigung,* or coming to terms with the Nazi past through heated media debates and a strong emphasis on the Third Reich in school history lessons. Giesen's typology of German self-understanding offers a nuanced impression of how West German identities evolved and interacted in the post-war years, contributing to eventual changes in reunified Germany's citizenship and migration laws in 2000 and 2005. For instance, it highlights the fact that non-ethnic Germans could be included in identities constructed around the country's spectacular post-war economic growth. The acceptance and integration of Vietnamese "boat people" into West German society can partly be attributed to this, although their eventual naturalisation as German citizens is another matter. It can also be linked to the internationalist identity which came to prominence in 1968.[16] Opposition campaigns to the citizenship reforms mooted by Gerhard Schröder's government reflect continuing unease with the prospect of divided national loyalties. Even after German unification, the country was unwilling to embrace multiculturalism as a means of national identity-building. This ambiguity stems from competing definitions of national identity: "Multiculturalism is controversial precisely because of its real and perceived (in)compatibility with national unity".[17]

Despite Germany's Cold War division into two states, both East (until 1974) and West German governments maintained that it continued to be a single nation, or "imagined community".[18] Ultimately, the popular expression of this

aspiration was decisive in bringing it closer to reality. *Wir sind ein Volk* (we are one people) soon supplanted *Wir sind das Volk* (we are the people) as the chant adopted by East Germans demonstrating for greater political freedom and the prospect of reunification in the Autumn of 1989. In West Germany, the official commitment to national unity had been maintained at the expense of reforging the discourse of national identity to include migrant workers. This exceptional situation now no longer obtains: "The peculiarity of an incomplete, vicarious nation-state for all Germans in the communist diaspora is no more" (Joppke 1999, 95). Although governments were less vocal in proclaiming that West Germany was not a country of immigration from the mid-1970s onwards, this policy has never been officially replaced or updated with a recognition of multiculturalism. Despite the potential to integrate guest workers into a new definition of post-unification nationhood, their presence continues to be considered a one-off product of historical circumstance rather than as part of the lasting inmigratory trend amply illustrated by the exhibition *Zuwanderungsland Deutschland*. Despite documenting five hundred years of immigration to Germany, the exhibition's choice of title does not represent a wholehearted endorsement of Germany as a country of immigration. At least one naturalised German citizen interprets the use of the term *Zuwanderung* over *Einwanderung* as signalling a reluctance to integrate foreigners into German society.[19] Although this may be seen as a linguistic nicety, it is a crucial indicator of a distinction in the national self-understanding between two types of imagined community, which in turn has an impact on citizenship law and its definition of who is and is not deemed to be German.

Citizenship is both: "A set of practices (cultural, symbolic and economic) and a bundle of rights and duties (civil, political and social) that define an individual's membership in a polity".[20] The following discussion focuses on examples of practices that help to define Vietnamese membership in the German polity. These practices are not only symbolic, but also cultural and political, since the delimitation of ethnic groups and their relationship to the national construct are necessarily reflections of power relations. Diaspora, meaning literally "to scatter over", refers to people who live outside their homeland but retain a strong attachment to it.[21] The memories they perpetuate may refer to a past, idealised or even imagined home. It is this link to the homeland, together with a relatively established and cohesive community abroad, which distinguishes members of a diaspora from individual migrants. Further features of diasporas have been proposed, such as the will to return and "traumatic dispersal", but few concrete cases will display all of these characteristics (Cohen 1997, 180). Types of diaspora, in turn, include refugees, traders, professionals and labourers, as well as movements resulting from colonialism. The Vietnamese diaspora has settled all over the world, but especially in the United

States, France, Australia and, to a lesser extent, Germany and the United Kingdom.

An archetypal example of those enduring "traumatic dispersal" from their homeland are the ethnic Chinese in Vietnam, expropriated entrepreneurs and enemies of the Communist regime who set out as "boat people" following the fall of Saigon in 1975 and found refuge in West Germany. Their attitudes to the Vietnamese homeland are likely to differ from those Vietnamese who came to East Germany as contract workers and stayed on despite being made redundant after reunification (Bui 2003, 157). Those who arrived during the 1990s are also more likely to have economic reasons for doing so, although political persecution continues to take place in Vietnam. Each group's experience of trying to make their way in Germany will also affect their readiness to adopt a second home. The Vietnamese diaspora in Germany is, therefore, clearly divided, although the East/West dichotomy should only be taken as a rough indicator. Despite their historical, geographical, cultural and ethnic differences, however, the Vietnamese do share cultural references including a strong and rich culinary tradition. The term diaspora is thus a useful shorthand for referring to their presence in Germany as a minority ethnic group with continuing, albeit ambivalent, links to Vietnam.

In an article entitled "African cuisines: recipes for nation-building?" Cusack demonstrates how: "National dishes quietly 'flag' the nation as examples of 'banal nationalism'".[22] This refers to everyday expressions of national identity, which are not explicit in the way a flag is waved at demonstrations but, like the limp flag outside public buildings, are nonetheless omnipresent.[23] Governments attempt to control the dominant definition of national identity in their continuous, legitimising process of nation-building. Those who later enter the fray, such as the Vietnamese in Germany, are invariably disadvantaged in their attempt to influence national identity construction. They face an uphill struggle in trying to interpret symbols of nationhood on their terms: "The battle for nationhood is a battle for hegemony, by which a part claims to speak for the whole nation and to represent the national essence" (Billig 1995, 27). Hall has looked at the ideological content of the immigration debate in the United Kingdom. In highlighting how certain actors are disadvantaged in the "struggle over meaning", he demonstrates the way in which opponents of the prevailing view are forced to reproduce the terms of the argument when stating their case, as "common sense" is exceedingly difficult to challenge.[24] Hall's analysis contrasts "accredited witnesses and spokesmen" with those "whose 'definitions' were always more partial, fragmentary and delegitimated" (Hall 1998, 1061). The Vietnamese are not as large, visible and organised an ethnic group in Germany as, for example, the Turks (Soysal 1994, 108). They have few opportunities to contribute to the citizenship debate and German society in

general, but the provision of Vietnamese food is one visible means they have of doing so.

Definitions of Vietnameseness in Germany can contribute to shaping hegemonic government discourse, albeit in a partial and fragmentary way. The battle for conceptual hegemony, for the right to define banal nationalism, takes place over flags, football and food among many other things. Associations with certain foods can be articulated as a recipe for nation-building (Cusack 2000, 207), a sign of multiculturalism[25] or a rejection of immigration (Edwards et al 2000, 298). The way in which members of the Vietnamese diaspora choose to represent their identity in the German context through culinary practices represents a form of enquiry with many sociological and anthropological antecedents.[26] The symbolic value of food should not be underestimated. Hunger strikes, communion wine and unleavened bread are potent examples.[27] The diets of Jews and Muslims are intimately linked to their religious beliefs. The Vietnamese, in turn, traditionally attribute medicinal and spiritual powers to certain foods, linking dog meat to male potency and balancing particular combinations of foods according to the precepts of Chinese medicine, for example.[28]

In a study of the Vietnamese community in Toronto, Canada, Pfeifer contrasts the generally positive local media coverage given to "boat people" arriving in the late 1970s with negative "race tagging" associating the Vietnamese with violent crime from the mid-1980s onwards.[29] The same phenomenon has also been observed in Australia (Edwards et al 2000, 302) and Germany (Bui 2003, 71). According to Pfeifer, Toronto's Vietnamese population tends to be over-represented in low-paid factory jobs, suffers from a high rate of unemployment and congregates in housing schemes on the outskirts of the city. Similarly, many East German contract workers who were laid-off after the fall of the Berlin Wall subsequently struggled with German bureaucracy and had difficulties finding permanent jobs. In Berlin, they tended to stay in the familiar East German districts where they were first housed, such as Marzahn and Lichtenberg. Their legal status was precarious: the state which had summoned them no longer existed and it took years of inter-governmental wrangling for their predicament to be regulated (Kolinsky 2004, 137). Some of those forced into a marginal existence turned to cigarette smuggling and violent crime, contributing to a negative media image which has hampered the Vietnamese community as a whole (Bui 2003, 70). Nevertheless, the story of Vietnamese entrepreneurship also needs to be told, the most visible signs being in the food and service sector. Well-presented and inviting restaurants immediately identifiable as Vietnamese may have a knock-on effect on perceptions of the ethnic group in Germany and may help to counteract bad press coverage. The focus of the following discussion will be on Germany's

capital city, Berlin, as the snaking scar of the former wall serves as an iconic reminder of how both German and Vietnamese histories of division have been played out in the city.

It is important not to trivialise symbolic links between food and diaspora identities. For instance, the degree of commitment to multiculturalism in Australia has sometimes been criticised as not going any deeper than an appreciation of "ethnic food". Critiques of multiculturalism have been formulated in terms of "the food's great, but..." with a concomitant increase in the "indigestion trope" alongside altogether more sinister images of contamination and inundation to describe immigration to Australia (Edwards et al 2000, 298). Food poisoning cases, as concrete instances of contamination, have been associated with ethnic groups and "race-tagged" in media reports there. This shows the potency of symbolic associations between food and ethnicity. Vietnamese immigration to Germany does not have the same long tradition as, say, that of Italian traders. Nor is it on a scale comparable to the Turkish population, Berlin having one of the largest communities outside of Turkey itself. Nonetheless, Vietnamese-run corner shops and Asian food stores are a common sight, especially in East Berlin.[30] What these enterprises have in common is that they tend not to flag their Vietnamese identity nor use it for marketing. On the other hand, and since Bui's research was published, Vietnamese-themed restaurants are increasingly springing up all over Berlin. The substantial investment required for such a venture suggests that their Vietnamese owners are relatively well-established and confident about the appeal of Vietnamese food to Germans. In contrast to bistros which hide behind a pan-Asian identity to avoid the negative connotations of Vietnamese ethnicity propagated in the press (Bui 2003, 180), they serve traditional Vietnamese dishes rather than generic, fast-food fare such as fried noodles. Dishes may still have been adapted to Western tastes in terms of portions, spices and presentation, but the restaurants nonetheless consciously offer up an interpretation of Vietnamese culinary identity.

Essentialised culinary identities can speak volumes about attitudes to national identity, in-groups and out-groups, and who might ultimately be accorded citizenship as a badge of belonging. Baudrillard has likened fusion cuisine to contamination or even a virus: "Stripping a culture of its real identity".[31] This assumes that a culture's real identity is somehow "pure and unpolluted" by the exotic, conveniently forgetting that even the lowly potato was originally introduced into European diets from South America (Hassoun and Raulin 1995, 126). This sort of "invention of tradition"[32] views mixtures as inherently negative and impoverishing rather than enriching. The exotic is contrasted to the local or folkloric (Hassoun & Raulin 1995, 128), completely eliding their mutual indebtedness throughout centuries of conquest, colonialism,

trade and migration. For instance, the Vietnamese tend to associate the European diet with the potato and their own with noodle soup, when both these foodstuffs are cultural hybrids resulting from colonisation. Even the so-called culinary "essence" of a culture is thus ultimately constructed. Vietnamese restaurateurs can therefore help to shape not only that essence, but also German attitudes towards the ethnic group in general. By constructing a palatable restaurant experience, something which tends to be positively associated with pleasure and relaxation, Vietnamese entrepreneurs can do much to reverse negative stereotypes of their ethnic group in Germany: "The desire to consume an item depends on recognising how close it is to the ideal that the individual has acquired for those circumstances" (Booth 1994, 3).

Vietnamese migrants to Australia have been observed to use food as a means of intercultural engagement with both their family heritage and the Australian way of life.[33] At the same time, they feed their nostalgia for Vietnam by doing their best to recreate traditional dishes with the available ingredients. Eating out is very much an urban phenomenon, a way of localising the process of globalisation (Thomas 2004, 54) and contributing to the creation of the public spaces so dear to urban planners. Similarly, the activities of Vietnamese enterpreneurs mark the cityscape and in so doing leave an imprint on German society. Vietnamese restaurants present an ethnic identity for German consumption, both literally and figuratively. Preliminary mapping of the emerging Vietnamese restaurant scene in Berlin distinguished three general types: traditional, personified and contemporary. A further category is the hybrid, pan-Asian restaurant which advertises Vietnamese dishes alongside green curries or sushi. The only thing linking the diversity of Thai, Vietnamese and Japanese cuisines is their "*exotisme culinaire*" (culinary exoticism), characterised by distance from the reference country, imported products and an association with warm climates.[34] In turn, Vietnamese restaurants draw on these features to offer very different visions of Vietnam. The traditional Vietnamese restaurant serves typical dishes in rustic surroundings. One such locale, situated close to Berlin's iconic Alexanderplatz, has waitresses dressed in the national costume (itself of recent vintage), bamboo furniture and a menu of such "authentic" Vietnamese staples as grilled pork with vermicelli (bun cha) and fried fish with dill (cha ca). As a "deterritorialised ethnosite"[35], this restaurant enables its clientele to immerse themselves in a symbolic construction of Vietnam which appeals to all five senses. This positive representation has a valorising function for the Vietnamese migrant community as a whole, in stark contrast to negative associations with crime and depressed urban wastelands. Another bright, inviting restaurant in Berlin's tourist centre displays an alluring image of an attractive Vietnamese woman cooking rice in an earthenware pot.

The woman wears a light undershirt, adding a whiff of eroticism so often linked to eastern exoticism in literature and travelogues.[36]

Turning to the "personified type", two Vietnamese restaurants, located respectively in the former East and West Berlin, are named after Vietnamese men whose pictures form a prominent part of the décor. Each, however, represents a very different embodiment of Vietnam. In one case, a large, sepia, colonial era portrait of an elderly gentleman fanning his wispy, white beard and wearing traditional dress epitomises the venerable Confucian scholar. In contrast, his compatriot in the other restaurant is portrayed as a strapping young man smiling into the camera, biceps bulging from under his sports shirt. He confounds the culinary time traveller (Regnier 2006, 9) who expects to be transported to a vision of the Far East familiar from colonial representations. Although the photograph seems to date from the 1960s (and is reputed to be the owner's father), the pared down décor and *nouvelle cuisine* on offer provide a contemporary take on Vietnamese style. Another restaurant nearby also identifies itself on the menu as representing the typical tastes of the young Vietnamese. What all these places have in common is a positive packaging of Vietnamese culture and identity which, save for a food poisoning scare, can only help to counteract negative stereotyping of the Vietnamese in Germany.

Restaurants are accessible microcosms connoted with pleasure and celebration. Although gastronomy continues to be the preserve of the elite, all the Vietnamese restaurants identified in Berlin have average prices and are thus accessible to the mass market. Visiting any eatery requires trust and acceptance: "Because the customer takes the product into his or her own body" (Bui 2003, 197). Both social and psychological factors affect people's perception of food, and the dominant discourse concerning the Vietnamese in Germany will have ramifications for their businesses and ultimately their citizenship aspirations. The racist attacks that take place in Germany, as elsewhere, show how precarious social acceptance can be, even when ethnic minorities are officially integrated into nation-building discourse. To take an example from an archetypal country of immigration:

> While Chinese, Vietnamese, Malaysian, Singaporean and other migrants from the Asian region are now considered an integral part of Australia's ethnic mix, these groups are still collectively *racialised* whenever a wave of moral panic about Asian immigration flares up (Stratton & Ang 1994).

The parallels with the multiculturalism debate are clear. Talk of the insidious effects of immigration points to a fundamental tension between citizenship and identity politics. This highlights an alleged clash between "citizenship as universal and identity as particular" (Isin & Wood 1999, 3) and the potentially

nefarious consequences for state security and social cohesion of a non-unified nation (Stratton & Ang 1994). Yet multiculturalism does not necessarily tend towards multinationalism or separatism within a state.

The nation is understood here as part of a mobilising ideology used by modern states to legitimise their power. Nation-building on the part of existing states will necessarily entail legal limitations on belonging. Admission to citizenship will, in turn, reflect a nation's self-understanding. Changing definitions of the nation are expressed through policies on citizenship and naturalisation based on criteria such as descent, place of birth, marriage and so on. The Cold War erected major barriers to imagining a German national identity not rooted in ethnicity. Reunification, coupled with the pressures of large-scale arrivals of ethnic German returnees and asylum seekers, signalled a pragmatic policy shift requiring changes to the united Germany's Basic Law. It is now politically possible to go about redefining German identity, and the incremental steps taken towards reforming citizenship law testify to this. However, continuing opposition to reform suggests that national identity formation is not keeping up with legislation, and that the prospect of Germany as a country of immigration, let alone a multicultural melting pot, has yet to make much headway (Dennis and Kolinsky 2004).

Whether a society is officially recognised as multicultural will depend on the dominant discourse of nation-building. Multiculturalism: "Provides a framework for a politics of *negotiation* over the very content of the national culture" (Stratton & Ang 1994). Canada, the United States, Australia, Germany and the United Kingdom, to name but a few, are all composed of many cultures, though they may be characterised by a dominant ethnic group.[37] Some integrate this fact into their national construct more than others, however. As the German and also the United States examples show, *de facto* multiculturalism is not the same as an officially multicultural state policy. The United States promotes a common national myth based on the War of Independence, its Constitution and pursuit of the American Dream. Germany's rejection of dual nationality and its reluctance to define itself as a country of immigration point to a requirement of undivided loyalty to a German nation which is hard to reconcile with multiculturalism. Canada and Australia, on the other hand, explicitly celebrate multiculturalism in their nation-building discourse as constitutive of the state (Stratton & Ang 1994), although this support has been more muted in Australian government rhetoric over the last decade. Whether in a country of ethnically-based citizenship or one espousing the multicultural model: "Ethnic stigma is the worst-case scenario for a migrant group" (Bui 2003, back cover). Diaspora cuisine makes a highly visible contribution to the receiving society, one which tends to be accepted even by those hostile to immigration. Its potential to turn

talk of floods, contamination and inundation into a discourse of digestion, diversity and greater overall satisfaction should not be underestimated.